RESCUE OF AN INNOCENT MAN.

THE MURDER OF JULIAN BLAIR, AND EVENTS THAT LED HIS SLAYER TO CONFESS.

Judge Josiah Marcellus held the sheets official paper in his hand as he explained matter to his faithful retainer.

"The Rumanian Consul-General has en called out of town, Cronkite," he d, "but he writes me fully, craving my in the case of Rudolph Nitze, a com- riot of his lately convicted of murder. he encloses an urgent letter from my r old friend, Mrs. Lescelles, I can't very ll refuse; though, so far as I see, there is solutely nothing that can be done."

"Rudolph Nitze?" returned Cronkite. "I all the case. He is the laborer who was ed for shooting Julian Blair, the pay- ster, up at the State dam. He was ught with the money in his possession, d a country jury convicted him without ving the box."

"He admitted the theft, it seems," the dge went on, "but claimed that he had me upon the dead body of the paymaster ng in the bottom of the light wagon, ile the horse browsed through the woods, e cash box on the seat."

"But the bullet that killed Blair fitted ex- ly the revolver which Nitze was in the bit of carrying."

"Yes, so the Consul says; and the prose- tion also showed that he had been at rk near the spot where the body was nd, and that Blair couldn't have killed self. Altogether it was a reasonably ong case, especially as no attempt was de by the defense to account for Blair's ath."

"But now, doesn't Nitze offer some possi- explanation?"

"According to the Consul, whom he n't think to send for until his cheap yer had abandoned the case, Nitze intains that as Blair was a handsome ung fellow, fond of society, devoted to ladies, inclined to be wild, his death ulted from either jealousy or revenge, d that if a shrewd detective were sent the boarding house of Mrs. Zell, where ir stayed, such a theory would be sub- antiated."

"It is tenable enough," mused Cronkite. wonder why he didn't think of it before? ncidence in time isn't coincidence in nt; and his theory would account for money being intact after the murder s committed. On the other hand, a lty man, especially if unimaginative, is ely to retain the motive while shifting blame. For example, how about Nitze self; what sort of a man is he?"

"A handsome young fellow," the Judge ounted slowly, "superior to his com- es in education and manners, and popu- in the society of Lakemont, the village r the dam. As you say, if the case e reversed, and Nitze was the victim lie Blair was the accused, Blair might h equal reason suggest jealousy or re- ge as the cause of the murder. But what of it?"

"Simply this," said Cronkite doggedly, "that if I am to go up there and investigate this matter, I should start from the very beginning, with the two facts that have been determined, namely, that Blair is dead, and that he could not have killed himself. Preconceptions mislead through the old scholastic system of dialectics, so dear to the police, whereby a theory is first accepted, and then facts are made in some way to accord with it.

"This is a case for experimental research. I should collect all possible information and through sifting and combining induct the truth from it. I propose then that you persuade the superintendent of public works, who is under obligations to you, to send me up there in the guise of an in- spector, say, one who is to advise him as to the progress made at the dam.

"I will put myself in Blair's place; that is, occupy his lodgings, meet his acquaint- ances, pursue his avocations, and through knowing his life try to learn the facts con- nected with his death."

"That is all very well as a working plan," assented the Judge somewhat acidly; "but please remember that the truth is the truth, whether evolved from one's inner consciousness or demonstrated from facts. The Consul lays great stress on Nitze's theory, so if your investigations tend to confirm it, confine them, please, to that particular line."

So reserved and sedate a man as Abel North, the new inspector, did not rouse much interest among the workers at Lake- mont, who soon recognized that his mission, temporary at best, was scientific rather than economic. At the boarding house, too, he adapted himself so readily to the second story front room and the seat at the table next to Mrs. Zell, the landlady, which once had been Julian Blair's, that the other guests caught themselves feeling strange and recent in comparison. Perhaps Nettie, the landlady's daughter, expressed the common thought when she said to the pantry maids:

"Trust an old tabby like that for making hisself to hum!"

At all events, he became as thoroughly accepted and as little considered as an in- stitution.

Mrs. Adele Warner, the border *in excelsis*, by virtue of her faded beauty, her reputed wealth, her facile widowhood, did look at the newcomer now and again as he plodded stolidly through his meals; but it seemed to Cronkite, from all he had been able to glean, that perhaps her glance was more a matter of habit than of personal interest.

Might it not be that responsive glances had once been returned from his desirable seat and that in their absence lurked the reason why, as Nettie had informed him, the "widder i ad fallen off dreadful of late?" Nettie, too, though as shallow and pert as a canary, seemed to have troubles of her own.

True, she flitted in and out of his room at all hours, with incessant talk and elo- quent shoulders, telling far more than she knew. True, her strident laugh reechoed through the house until one longed for the clash of a boiler shop. And yet one night as Cronkite passed through the dimly lighted hall to his room there in the window seat was the girl, weeping, moaning, rocking to and fro in such poignant grief that she was not aware of his approach.

"It is too bad about Rudolph Nitze, isn't it?" said Cronkite.

"Too bad!" screamed the girl. "I wisht that he might be hanged a hundred times over, so I do, for killing such a grand man as Mr. Blair."

And away she sped, down the hall, from the compassionate but comprehending gaze of the new inspector.

That was the end of Nettie. The next morning, at the breakfast table, her mother announced that the girl had gone to visit an aunt, tidings which were received with equanimity by the guests with the excep- tion of Mrs. Warner, who looked unutter- able things.

Cronkite had been content to learn of Nettie's departure; for her answer to his question had, in his judgment, eliminated her from the scope of his inquiry. But now—what did that wriggling, shrugging woman mean to indicate by her dumb show?

Something more than was obvious, he felt; but what? He did not have long to wait before he learned.

That afternoon, as the new inspector was passing along the piazza, Mrs. Warner, as if from a sudden resolution, beckoned him to her side.

"Being a stranger," she began, with a languid smile, "you can't realize, I suppose the intense interest we all have felt in the Nitze case."

"To a student, in a modest way, of psy- chology," replied Cronkite, "all cases in- volving the issues of life and death must be interesting, even though he be so strange that his interest can't be personal. But this case, from what I have heard, has little to offer—a sordid, commonplace mur- der, wasn't it?"

"I was ill at the time of the trial," the lady went on, "but the more I think of it, the more I'm convinced that certain aspects were shamefully neglected by the defense."

"The money was found in the young man's possession——"

"Yes; but he insisted that Mr. Blair was dead when he took it."

"The bullet fitted the revolver he carried, and the other men having similar revolvers were at work in a distant place——"

"All of them?"

"So, I understand——"

"Suppose Mr. Blair had such a revolver himself?"

"Ah, but the wound couldn't have been self-inflicted."

"Suppose the murderer in taking Blair's revolver and then restoring it to the place where he kept it had calculated cunningly that suspicion would be directed against one of the laborers——"

"That would account for the money being intact after the murder was com- mitted," mused Cronkite, repeating in- voluntarily his words to the Judge.

"Yes; and the murder, then, instead of being commonplace and sordid, might prove a fascinating, psychological study of some such elemental passion as jealousy or revenge. Heigho! while we have been speculating, that inevitable evening breeze has sprung up, and no Nettie to send to my room for my shawl! I hadn't supposed that the absence, however mysterious, of that wild young creature could affect me; but we invalids are so dependent, you know."

And, with a smile that softened but did not obliterate her somewhat strained ex- pression, Mrs. Warner gracefully with- drew.

"Phew!" soliloquized Cronkite. "As full of meat as an egg. I suppose I must obey the Judge's directions; but it isn't right. Instead of following, I am being led."

And with a dissatisfied air he, too, went upstairs to search his room again, but more definitely. Definiteness in search is often half the battle. Cronkite had not thought of a revolver when, on entering into possession, he had looked for traces of the former tenant.

Now he drew out the bureau drawers, and felt up the chimney, and rapped along the floor and the walls until a hollow sound caused him to remove a small section of the baseboard, behind which lay concealed a cheap weapon of the identical bulldog pattern that had played so ominous a part in the Nitze case.

Cronkite examined the revolver closely in the western light. On the butt the initials "J. B." were carved. One chamber was empty and foul from smoke. Around the trigger was twisted a thread of blue and white material, as if it had been caught and torn from a woman's dress.

There was more perplexity than exulta- tion on the detective's face when he went down to dinner, and yet fortune seemed again to be favoring him, with Mrs Warner as its unconscious high priestess. That lady was already engaged in an affable conversation with Mrs. Zell on the con- genial topic of the fashions, and, as he seated himself, was saying:

"I always did like that blue and white gown of yours, but you seem never to wear it."

"I had it made over for Nettie—don't you remember?" Mrs. Zell answered simply.

"Why, so you did; and I suppose she soon ragged it out strolling through the woods." And with one side glance that might mean "Don't you see?" Mrs. Warner devoted herself to picking daintily at the food.

It was all very plain to Cronkite—too plain to be conclusive.

The theory which Rudolph Nitze had suggested to the Consul, and the Consul had written to the Judge, and the Judge had impressed upon him, might now be substantiated by facts without any greater juggling of them than usually occurred in a criminal case. An ignorant country girl like Nettie, betrayed by a man far above her in wealth, education and social stand- ing, might have taken such deadly re- venge, especially if goaded by jealousy.

Food for jealousy, too, had been present, for he had learned that Blair had been at- tentive to Mrs. Warner, and that she had suffered a long and dangerous illness im- mediately after his death. What, then, was lacking?

But yet Cronkite hesitated, recognizing the *simulacrum* but not the substance of truth. Was it reasonable to conceive of shallow, frivolous Nettie, a creature of passing impressions, being driven to de- liberate and complicated action by those passions which, while they serve, enslave the more through their grim warders, bitterness and despair?

What did his knowledge of the girl tell him—knowledge acquired without a pre- conceived theory to color and twist it? He had seen her in the throes of shame, transient, of course, from her very nature, yet agonizing while it lasted, and her answer to his sudden question had shown her hatred for Nitze and her love for Blair—that love compounded largely of vanity and pride which had led her to easy ruin. It had shown, too, that she believed implicitly in Nitze's guilt.

Such being the facts, the house of sus- picions and surmises was demolished. Why had it been so painfully reared? Why had the artful attempt been made to lead him by the nose?

There was no doubt as to who the person was who had done the one and the other. Mrs. Warner was the goddess behind the machine—a rather cheap and artificial god- dess, almost palpably playing a part. Well, so much more shame upon him that he could have been diverted for a moment from a method of inquiry which he knew to be sound.

Applying this method to her words and deeds, what inferences might reasonably be made? Why, that on learning after her illness that Nitze was convicted, she had plotted to establish his innocence by throw- ing suspicion upon Nettie, whom she knew to be already hopelessly compromised through her relations with Blair.

Why had she contrived so cruel and wicked a scheme? Perhaps through those elemental passions, jealousy and revenge which she herself had sought to make the motive in the case.

The chain ran logically back from the Judge, the Consul and Nitze to this woman, whatever her inspiration may have been.

Cronkite made inquiry of the warden of the prison where Nitze was confined, and learned that no one had either called upon or written to the convicted man. This indubitable fact transferred the inter- est to the Roumanian Consul-General, who now became the object of his investi- gations. When these had been concluded by another indubitable fact, the detective returned to Lakemont a sadder and a wiser man.

Mrs. Warner was seated on the piazza as Cronkite again approached on his way to his room. She looked weary and wan, and in her eyes burned an intolerable anxiety.

She moved her skirts and waved her hand as if inviting him to a chair by her side; but the detective's face was averted—he was going by. Perhaps she might not have another opportunity—and, oh, she must know; she could not wait another day.

"Well, well?" she asked involuntarily, against her better judgment.

Cronkite stopped; he stood before her, stolid, stubby, commonplace; yet so un- usually grave as to be impressive.

"There is something you would ask me, madam?" he inquired gently.

"Is there anything new in the Nitze case?" she whispered.

"No, nothing new."

"I don't believe it," cried the woman in a sudden, ungovernable fury. "It can't be possible that you, Judge Marcellus's detective, with such clues in your posses- sion, could not have traced the crime to that wretched girl! Think of her grounds for killing Blair! He ruined her, and then tossed her aside with contempt. Think of his revolver, with one cartridge gone, hid where she knew he kept it, with the raveling of her dress caught on the trigger——"

"Madam, madam, let me entreat you to be silent. Don't you know you are con- victing yourself by the show of such ex- clusive knowledge?"

Mrs. Warner gasped like one rousing from a trance. Then she lolled back in- differently; but the pallor of her lips as she smiled, and the trembling of her fingers as she fanned, disclosed that she realized how she had betrayed herself.

"Oh, I don't know about that," she replied airily. "I have merely mentioned matters of common report."

"Be it so," agreed Cronkite, as if about to go. "I don't wish to cross-examine you."

"You don't dare."

"Well, then, how did you know about the revolver with the incriminatory threads?"

"Oh, I watched you search for it the other day."

"How did you know that I am a detective?"

"Any one might know that from your walk and conversation."

"Judge Marcellus's?"

Mrs. Warner hesitated.

"I knew that," she said slowly. "Why, I knew that from Nitze. He told me that Judge Marcellus had become interested in the case."

"Here is a report from the warden: 'No one has seen Nitze; no one has written to him; has communicated with no one.'"

"I should have said that the Rumanian Consul-General told me that he had interested the Judge in the case."

"Madam, there is no Rumanian Consul- General in the United States, or attached to the foreign consular service in this country. Rumania has no such officer accredited here. He is a man of straw—fictitious. The Judge was easily imposed upon, and so was I."

Mrs. Warner uttered a wild laugh.

"Easily imposed upon? Poor things! By whom, pray?"

"I have the statement of Mrs. Lescelles that she mentioned the Judge's skill in solv- ing mysteries to a certain lady, who, singu- larly enough, had the chance to appropriate some of her notepaper, and whose hand- writing shows the same characteristics as are marked in the forged note of intro- duction. Even more singular is the chain of facts whereby I have traced the paper used by this non-existent Consul from the stationer who engraved it to this same lady."

"And her name is?"

"Mrs. Adele Warner."

A convulsion passed through the woman's frame. She pressed her handkerchief to her lips, and when she removed it it was covered with blood.

"Do you think I fear you," she asked faintly, "when I have such assurance against prosecution?"

"But Nitze must not be executed," replied Cronkite firmly. "Let me tell you that I have evidence of your quarrel with Blair the day before his death, when you re- proached and threatened him for his con- duct with Nettie——"

"Spare me—I was mad with jealousy and revenge. Then I honestly tried to save an innocent man; but those two deadly passions again tempted and misled me. Look at me—I am torn by them even as the demoniac was. You shall have my written confession—but spare me for a little space; and then you will be free to use it."

Cronkite bore back the written confession to the Judge, who held it for a little space; and then he was indeed free to use it.

INTELLECT IN DRAW POKER

Amos J. Anklebuster Calls a Bluff and Takes All the Money in Sight.

"There is them," said old man Greenhut, at sets up f'r bein' strong on religion, g o' readin' the Good Book continual, 'mebbe l'arnin' a few verses by heart. that kind ain't to be depended on when omes to makin' a practical application the golden words o' wisdom that's wrote that book.

"Take that there proverb that says 'My , hearken thou not to the voice o' the ffer,' specially when he bluffs, not wisely, too well.' There's a heap o' parsons read that in the pulpit in the mornin' never think o' givin' heed to it when ey was sittin' into a friendly game at ght.

"Now Amos J. Anklebuster, he were tirely different."

At this point the old man paused sud- ly, and busied himself in counting a antity of small change which he pulled of his trousers pocket. Finding a dollar of dubious appearance, he utinized it carefully and then dropped in his cash drawer.

This performance was rather puzzling the beholders, since it did not seem en- ely clear that any great advantage was be gained by transferring the coin from pocket to the drawer, though it was doubtedly true that his habit was to ke change for his customers from the awer.

However that may have been, the old n appeared to take considerable satis- ction in the thought of what he had done, d, as if he considered himself entitled a extra indulgence because of some expected saving, he took down a box particularly choice cigars, such as he oked on special occasions only, and ected the best one he could find in the r.

Lighting this with great care he walked ound to his favorite seat by the window, d placing his feet on the window sill he a long time, looking at them, and smok- in silence.

Then Joe Bassett, growing impatient, claimed:

"Touchin' this here Anklebuster. Who s he?"

"He were a man 't mought ha' been the eriff o' this county," said Greenhut, "if 'd chose to stay here an' run f'r office n triflers as got elected on the stren'th three or four extra lucky gun plays. ' he were the man 't made the most alleturural play at draw poker 't was er saw in this community the time when nestone Tucker come here to do up Ar- nsas City.

"Folks uster say 't Amos J. Anklebuster too hasty an' impulsive like for to make good poker player. He 'peared to do rything half cocked, so to speak, an' f the time it looked like he was lettin' e money afore he right knowed what his nd was.

"Them was the days when we was tryin' get together talent enough for to build the reppytation o' Arkansas City, an' were most important for to do up any sider 't happened to stop over. 'Peared me like Anklebuster were intelligent ough to make a particular good player if y he'd put the curb onto his disposition. I says to him:

"'Anklebuster,' I says, 'why don't you e things more easy like? Looks to me it was better to give the other feller a nse o' tyin' hisself up when you're tle sure o' holdin' the best cards. When man is so blamed eager to get into the first like you 'pear to be ain't it a kind warnin' to other folks to stay out?'

"But Anklebuster, he says: 'Greenhut, 's my way o' playin'. If you makes your mind,' he says, 'to soak a man with a bungstarter,' he says, ''pears to me you don't want to lose no time a-doin' of it.'

"Well, I c'd see there was sense into that, an' I says so to Anklebuster. 'But,' I says, 'if you play so all fired sudden like, don't you keep the other feller f'm contributin' as much as he'd oughter to the pot?'

"'What if I do?' says Anklebuster. 'I git the pot, don't I? Most gen'ly I do, that is. An' there's other pots a'terwards 't he c'n contribute to. Anyway, that's my way o' playin', an' I ain't no gre't loser up to now?'

"There wa'n't no disputin' that, an' I seen the on'y thing was to let him go on playin' his own game his own way, but it did make me nervous to see how all fired quick he was, until that time when he made his great play ag'in' Crossbone Tucker. Then I seen there was advantages about his game what he couldn't ha' got no other how.

"Crossbone Tucker had come to town like a raveling wolf, a-howlin' for blood, an' havin' a reppytation o' bein' the slickest dealer an' the coolest bluffer 't played cards onto the boats. 'Pears he uster stop off, now and then, some place, an' look f'r the best players there was, an' tackle 'em single handed.

"An' he'd stopped off here an' was doin' up the talent when Amos J. Anklebuster come home. He'd been down the river on business.

"Now, there hadn't nobody never caught Crossbone Tucker dealin' crooked. That was one reason why he was knowed f'r a slick dealer.

"Well, Anklebuster heerd about all this afore he'd been home two hours, an' there was them that told him 't Crossbone Tucker had took in over $800 in the four days he'd been playin'.

"I reckon ropes an' chains wouldn't ha' held Anklebuster when he heerd this. They said he was waitin' fer his supper when they told him, but he didn't wait no more. He came down to my place so swift that they lost sight of him on the road an' he rushed in, tempestuous, just as Crossbone Tucker were settin' in with three or four citizens as had been hit tola'ble hard a'ready, but was game for to make a effort to get square.

"Anklebuster just set in with the rest. He didn't waste no time askin' if he c'd have a hand, or whether it 'd be agreeable for him to join, nor nothin'. He just set in.

"That was his way. If he was going to do anythin' he just done it. If there was any objections goin' to be made, they c'd be made after, for all he cared. But this time there wa'n't none.

"More 'n likely there weren't no game ever played in Arkansas City 't was brung to a finish more sudden like 'n that one was. There was on'y three deals in the hull game, but they sure was remarkable deals.

"First off it were Crossbone Tucker's deal, an' they'd made a jackpot for to start. Anklebuster set first an' he hadn't got his cards fair off the table afore he opened the pot for the size of it. It didn't look like he c'd ha' saw what his cards was, but I reckon he must have, f'r he wa'n't likely to make no such break as to open without the cards.

"Well, anyway, everybody came in, an' Tucker looked at his hand tol'able close afore he spoke. He were some slow in his play, bein' reckoned a careful player, even if he did bluff outrageous sometimes.

"But when he'd studied his cards he raised it ten, and he hadn't got his money in the pot afore Anklebuster made it twenty more to draw cards.

"You'd ha' thought some on 'em 'd ha' dropped under a double raise, seein' nobody had raised it afore it came to Tucker, but they didn't, none on 'em. I reckon they must ha' thought it were a bluff atween them two.

"They all come in an' Tucker didn't raise again, so the hull six on 'em had $37 apiece into the pot afore the draw. They'd on'y took a hundred apiece, to start, an' 'twas table stakes, so it looked like somebod y was goin' to get hurt.

"Well, Anklebuster he called for three cards, showin' plain enough 't he had aces, 'thouten he'd been actin' foolish altogether, an' all the others took two apiece.

"Then Anklebuster he picked up his draw with one hand an' shoved his hull pile in the pot with t'other. 'Peared like he'd bet again 'thout known' what he was bettin' on, but that was on'y 'count he was so 'mazin' rapid in what he did.

"Then, one after another, all six on 'em shoved their piles up to the middle o' the table. O' course there couldn't nobody raise, bein' 'twas table stakes, an' the on'y thing to do was to show down.

"Anklebuster showed first, bein' he was called, an' his hand was three aces. Every- body else had threes till it came to Tucker, an' he'd caught his fourth ten spot.

"Mebbe 'twa'n't none surprisin' 't that sort o' play was too swift f'r some on 'em, an' three o' the citizens dropped out. Ankle- buster, he 'peared to be just het up a bit, an' he pulls out six hundred, so's to be even with Tucker, an' reached over for the cards, it bein' his next deal.

"An' there were another man in the party named Wimple, 't 'lowed he'd take another chanst at it, an' he pulls out six hundred. They made another jackpot, each man puttin' up $5, 'thouten any on 'em sayin' nothin. It were a game f'r the marrer, then, an' there wa'n't no words wasted.

"Wimple had first say, an' he opened fer $15. Tucker made it $30 an' Anklebuster made it $50. I looked to see Wimple lay down a'ter that, but he come back at 'em strong. All's he did was to see the double raise an' put a hundred dollar bill in the pot.

"Then Tucker he made it a hundred more, an' Anklebuster done just what he done the deal afore. He put his pile in the pot, an' the others made good.

"Then they all stood pat an' Anklebuster showed a full house ag'in' two flushes.

"Wimple said he reckoned he'd had enough, but Tucker hadn't lost only his first hundred an' what velvet he'd accumu- lated, an' he were keen for more, so he says he'll play Anklebuster a freeze-out for as much as he has, which it figured up to $1,800.

"Anklebuster says he's agreeable, an' Tucker flashes his wad. It were Tucker's deal, an' Anklebuster antes ten calls twenty, makin' a stiff start.

"Well, the cards was still runnin', f'r Tucker he come in, an' Anklebuster raised it twenty. Tucker grinned, an' put up fifty more, an' Anklebuster went back at him with two hundred.

"Then Tucker he tried Anklebuster's play, an' he shoves the hull o' his pile into the pot, an' it was right there 't Anklebuster showed what a intellect he had in the way o' rememberin' a golden text.

"He says to me a'ter: 'When I seen him push in his pile I thought o' that verse o' Scripter that says, "My son, harken thou not to the voice o' the bluffer, 'specially when he bluffs not wisely but too well," an' I knowed it was time for somethin' to be did, quick.'

"An' afore Crossbone Tucker knowed what he was doin' Anklebuster pulled his gun an' blowed the hull top of his head plumb off. Then he took the pot."

Odd Things Some Cats Have Been Doing of Late

How Shrewd Cat Catches Sparrows.

From the Laconia Democrat.

Laconia boasts of a cat which combines science with her natural instincts of bird hunting to rather a remarkable degree.

She has discovered that when she turns her back toward a flock of sparrows in the street they pay little or no attention to her and approach quite closely. She has also discovered that the plate glass show window of the Booth jewelry store makes an excellent mirror under certain conditions of light, and that by looking toward the window she can watch the chippies in the street and at the same time give the birds no reason to suspect that she is interested in anything except Booth's gold rings and jewelry dis- play.

Sparrows come along the street every few minutes, and, although at first rather shy of the cat, they evidently observe that she is paying no attention to them, and grad- ually work up quite close to her in their search for food. Pussy keeps perfectly passive until one of the birds happens to stray within easy jumping distance, and then she turns like a flash and captures the un- lucky bird in an instant.

People who observe the cat for the first time gazing at the reflection of the sparrows obtain an idea that she herself is being fooled by the reflection and stop to watch, expecting that she will finally jump against the show window in her efforts to catch the birds, but they find that they have underestimated kitty's intelligence when a bird approaches too near the dead line.

Cat Adopts Young Squirrels.

From the Hartford Courant.

William Deubel of River street, Danbury, has a cat which is nursing a family of five little gray squirrels. A few days ago the cat gave birth to five kittens, but as cats were numerous they were taken away and drowned.

The next day Mr. Deubel's son found an orphaned family of little gray squirrels in a hollow tree in the woods. As the mother was nowhere to be seen he brought the squirrels home, and as an experiment they were given to the old cat for adoption, as she was still mourning the loss of her kittens. The old cat looks with wonderment on the strange manners of her new family, but she guards the little fellows jealously, and there is already a real affection between the orphans and their foster mother

Cat and Coon Friends.

From the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Friendship and possibly affection have sprung up between a cat and a large wild raccoon at Avery's logging camp, in Thurston county.

One morning recently the camp cook heard the cat mewing at the open kitchen door and purring in an inviting way. Investi- gation showed the coon with his front feet on the doorstep in apparent indecision as to whether freedom was worth giving up for his new partner. Every day since the coon has come to the cook's tent to play with the cat, and present indications are that he will soon become entirely domesticated.

Mugs, Friend of Engineers.

From the Kansas City Journal

Mugs, a little black and white kitten, re- turned to the Union Depot the other night from Moberly, Mon. Mugs is a traveler and is recognized as the depot mascot.

No one about the depot seems to know when Mugs appeared or how she got her name. To say that Mugs is pretty would be stretching a point to the limit, but the depot guides and engineemen don't care much for beauty. They like Mugs because Mugs likes them. The cat scampers about through the crowds and under the engines, but seems to knew when it is safe so to and when not.

About two weeks ago when Engineer Stout, who holds the throttle on the Wabash Flier out of here, climbed into his cab he found the kitten sitting on the seat. Mugs jumped down, and he thought the cat was gone until the train had gained full speed. All his attention was on the track in front of him, when with a start he found the kitten sitting in his lap, swaying with the engine and play- ing with the loose sleeve of his jumper. The cat had no permit to ride on the engine, and yet Stout didn't see how he could stop the train to put it off, and it was out of the ques- tion to drop it out of the window. So Mugs rode to Moberly, and when Stout came back to Kansas City he brought the kitten with him. It boarded the Katy fast mail in much the same manner and took a trip to Parsons. Night before last it boarded the Wabash engine like an old trainman and took a little run down to Moberly again.

Rat Adopted Into Cat Family.

From the Warren Mirror.

We are told a cat and rat story that is worth publishing as something very unusual.

Charles Farnsworth of Saybrook has a cat that is the mother of a family of small kittens. Recently the mother cat went to the barn and found a young rat, which she took in her mouth and carried to the nest of kittens, and has since nursed and cared for it as one of her own family.

Young Wildcats at Play.

From the St. Albans Messenger.

As H. D. Fletcher was at work on the moun- tain back of Butternut Hill, Johnson, he came upon a couple of young wildcats, about as large as common house cats.

They were sleek and handsome and were playing and frisking like ordinary kittens. Having no weapons with him and being accompanied by his little son, Mr. Fletcher decided not to meddle with them, fearing an encounter with the mother, who was probably not far away.

Big Maltese Tolled Church Bell.

Peru correspondence Indianapolis News.

William Baker's big Maltese cat created some excitement yesterday morning when it tolled the bell of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, on Flax Hill, a suburb of this city. The bell is about the size of an ordinary din- ner bell, with a clapper that weighs less than a pound.

"Little Willie," as the cat is called, likes sparrows, and went hunting to the belfry of the little church yesterday morning about 4 o'clock. A sparrow must have been in the bell to start with, and when the cat made a jump for it the bell tolled.

The swinging clapper then attracted the attention of the cat more than did the spar- row, and "Little Willie" began to play with it. The bell sounded several times, and the people living near by peered through their windows to see what was happening. Some thought there was to be an early morning service, while others supposed that some one was in trouble. Mr. Baker investigated, and found his pet cat in the belfry playing with the bell clapper.

Cat Takes Hen's Nest.

From the St. Augustine Record.

Finding her nest invaded, a bantam hen, owned by George Old's children, raised the echoes and the sleepers in that vicinity this morning.

An investigation revealed the fact that a cat with a litter of kittens had taken posses- sion of the nest and retained it despite the racket raised by the chickens. The hen's patience finally became exhausted, and in she marched and took a reserved seat on the cat's back. She laid her egg and then left the feline family in possession of the den.

While the hen was trying to oust the cat the din was terrific.

Cat That Nursed Coons.

From the Lewiston Journal.

Nestled in a soap box in the kitchen of the farmhouse of John Pooler, near Neury, is a family of six raccoons being nursed by the family cat, after the little animals had barely escaped death at the teeth of a cross- cut saw which Mr. Pooler was working. The mother of the raccoons was killed by the saw, being unable to escape from the log through the same hole that she had entered late last fall.

If the orphans thrive in the future as they have in the past few days they will live to maturity, much to the delight of the Pooler children, who have already named them after the children of President Roosevelt's family. Mr. Pooler's cat immediately took a liking to the coons when they were brought to the house and since then has nursed them assiduously.

CUPID BALKED BY THE CADDIE

A Widow's Love Affair on the Links and the Accident That Spoiled Everything.

There was an evident reason why the Widow Topleigh should have missed Bluffy from the crowd of danglers always in at- tendance on her. He possessed wealth, leisure and the dignity of age, while the others were for the most part college youngsters, or, if older, as manifestly in- eligible to a prudent woman. One of the indications that Mrs. Topleigh possessed prudence was her firm resolve not to be- come, should she risk a second venture into matrimony, a "young man's darling." Hence Mrs. Topleigh could never fathom the secession of Bluffy, for she had in many little ways made plain to him that she liked him very much.

Bluffy's first golfing with Mrs. Topleigh had been accidental—the casual pairing by the club secretary for a mixed foursome—but the subsequent rounds had been sought with confusion of mind and palpitation of heart. That earliest mixed foursome had been marked by a mishap—in swinging back to drive Bluffy had hit Mrs. Top- leigh's arm a sharp blow with the club—and love had come into his life with the smile with which she accepted his excuses.

With each succeeding round of the course with Mrs. Topleigh Bluffy's heart beat with more force. He used to lie awake nights worrying about the affection for the widow that had come so suddenly into being and whether he would be wise to marry or not. After more than fifty years Bluffy was in sore perplexity over the troubles that might begin with marriage.

"Women, the best of them, are so self- ish," would be his last conclusion each night. "I'll say good by to Mrs. Topleigh after breakfast to-morrow and go off yacht- ing with the gang."

But at the greeting with the fascinating widow the resolution always faded into thin air. At the sparkle of her eyes and the warm handshake Bluffy would be a true gallant again. The "gang"—all married, by the way—had to put in their time at threesomes in the absence of Bluffy. They all thought, without a doubt, that he would marry the widow and, not to be too modest about it, this is what the widow thought.

In the confidence of a conquest, Mrs. Topleigh quite unconsciously began to assume a proprietary interest in the rich bachelor. For one thing she objected to Red Scrapple as their caddie that fateful afternoon at Willow Brook, but here she found an adamantine firmness in Bluffy.

"Not have Red with us?" cried Bluffy in protest. "Why, he's the cleverest kid on the links—besides, he always caddies for me."

"Oh, very well," was Mrs. Topleigh's response. To Scrapple, who had always hid when he saw a woman or a poor player seeking a caddie, it was not "very well." He deemed it a condescension to carry in a mixed foursome, especially when he had to tote both bags.

The Willow Brook links had formerly been the Topleigh farm, and in a cor- ner of the course was a little graveyard of the sort often to be met with in quiet country neighborhoods. A neat fence surrounded the plot, which now held only the Topleigh family vault. Should a ball be sliced into the plot from the tee it was always called "out of bounds," as a matter of course, and another ball dropped and played.

It was Mr. Bluffy's ill luck—or was it good luck?—to slice his drive from that tee. The ball soared in a graceful curve straight toward the clump of trees that shaded the old burial place.

The college boy who, with Miss Aire, was their opponent drove off a screamer true to the line. Bluffy dropped a ball on the tee, and Mrs. Topleigh only drove it some eighty yards, into a bunker.

"This will make us one up, and with but one more to play it will be our match" shouted Miss Aire, thoughtlessly. "I'm sorry for you old folks."

How Mrs. Topleigh hated her for the speech! There was but one chance to save the hole.

"Perhaps the first ball is not out of bounds," suggested Bluffy.

"I will go over and see," exclaimed Mrs. Topleigh. "If it is inside, I will play it."

Off she hurried, Red Scrapple behind with the clubs, until the intervening bushes par- tially hid Mrs. Topleigh from the others, who were walking on slowly toward the bunker. Presently, from out the thicket, a ball came with splendid direction and only stopped on the putting green.

"Hurrah!" yelled Bluffy. "That will win the hole for us."

"It was just within bounds and I had a beautiful lie," explained Mrs. Topleigh, when she had rejoined the party. "I took my brassy to it."

Miss Aire messed her shot, so the college boy had to play the odd to gain the green. Mrs. Topleigh and Bluffy won the hole in 4 to 5, and as they halved the short one to follow they were the winners of the match.

"So sorry, dear," was Mrs. Topleigh's parting word with Miss Aire. "You look so warm and flustered, but a nap will freshen you up for dinner."

"A most remarkable recovery! Your shot from the rough undoubtedly won for us. Another woman would have been too rattled to make it." This and much more praise did Bluffy heap on the satisfied widow. He then and there screwed up his courage to the sticking point. "Meet me, won't you, in the conservatory after dinner?"

"Why, certainly, Mr. Bluffy," assented the widow in her sweetest voice, as she stepped into her carriage. What could the man mean?

"Great shot that, eh?" continued Bluffy, still harping on the wonderful play, to Red Scrapple, as he took his clubs from that urchin.

"Yer talkin', but der yer wanter know how she did it?" asked the imp of mischief.

"She bangs me on der nut an' sez she'll do me fer fair if I gives it away—but I'm no cheat."

The boy led Bluffy over the greensward to the thicket near the old graveyard. He pointed to a gap in the fence and to the divot cut out by Mrs. Topleigh in playing the shot from within the burial place.

"Der ball was teed up all right, but, say, she knew it was out er bounds."

The boy thought only of the golfing vio- lation and of his desire to square for the many snubs from the widow. But Bluffy saw far more in the incident than the cheat- ing. Cold shivers crept along his spine. The widow, in her eagerness to gain his approval, had played from the vault which held the body of her first husband.

"Red, here is $10 for you," said Bluffy, in faint but positive tones. "I—I—am going away, at once, to my yacht. Tell my friends—you know who—to join me there. But not a word to Mrs. Topleigh."

Was Unable to Get the Letter Back.

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

Miss Carey Thomas, the president of Bryn Mawr College, talked at a luncheon about the ingenuousness of children.

"A friend of mine," she said, "once showed me a letter that her little son had written her from Andover. The letter ran like this:

"'Dear Mother, I am well and I hope you are well. Will you please send me two dollars? I know the last did not last long, but it is all spent now, and I need two dollars badly. I hope you are well. I am well. Please do not forget, two dollars.'

"Then there was this postscript:

"'I was so ashamed to ask for money so soon after the last you sent that I sent after the postman to get this letter back, but it is too late; he had gone.'"